

the latter is paler than that of *S. pinetorum*. All the other colours are darker in about the same proportion, though the difference in the colour of the lower parts is far less great.

*S. socialis* has a similar reddish bill at some seasons, so it is quite possible that this member may become entirely black in midsummer specimens of *S. pinetorum*.

## VI.—On two new Species of Birds from Africa.

By Captain G. E. SHELLEY.

ON receiving Mr. Sharpe's seventh volume of the 'Catalogue of Birds,' I was enabled to feel confident that I had recently added to my collection examples of two species new to science. One I propose to name after Mr. R. Bowdler Sharpe, as a mark of the high merit I consider every ornithologist should recognize in his work.

### 1. APALIS SHARPII, sp. n.

General plumage slate-colour, passing into brownish black on the entire head and neck. Sides of the body ashy grey, fading into white down the centre of the lower breast and on the under tail-coverts; axillaries and under wing-coverts white. There are only four feathers present in the tail of this specimen; three of these are narrowly tipped with buffish white. Bill black; legs rufous-brown. Total length 4·2 inches, culmen 0·45, wing 1·8, tail 1·8, tarsus 0·7.

*Hab.* Gold Coast.

*Euprinodes schistaceus*, Cass., appears to be the nearest ally of this species, from which it may be readily distinguished by the brownish-black colouring of the head and neck, the darker deep slaty grey of the back, and the absence of any olive shade.

### 2. CRATEROPUS SQUAMULATUS, sp. n.

Upper parts brown, darker on the crown and nape, and gradually shading into black towards the forehead, where the feathers are narrowly edged with buffish white; the buff edges gradually become broader and browner towards the back of

the crown, but remain of the same buffy white on the eye-brows and feathers bordering the ear-coverts. On the back and sides of the lower neck the pale margins to the feathers are only indicated towards their tips, and form obscure pale brown spots, which become almost obsolete on the mantle. Lower back and upper tail-coverts uniform brown, of a less ashy shade than in *C. plebeius* and *C. jardinii*. Wings and tail dark brown. Lores, cheeks, and ear-coverts black. Chin white, with broad subterminal black bars; throat dusky brown, with broad pale buff ends to the feathers; remainder of the underparts brown, less dusky than the throat, and slightly shaded with rufous towards the abdomen and under tail-coverts; the chest-feathers have pale shafts and partial buffish edges, more inclining to shaft-spots than on the throat. Under wing-coverts incline to rufous-buff, and the inner margins of the quills are partially of that colour. Bill black; legs dark brown; "iris golden yellow" (*Dr. Fischer*). Total length 8·7 inches, culmen 0·8, wing 3·9, tail 4, tarsus 1·25.

The type is labelled "♂, Mombassa, 23,7,77, *Dr. Fischer*," and has been incorrectly referred on the label to *C. kirki*.

*C. reinwardti*, Swains., appears to be its nearest ally, from which it may be distinguished by not having the crown uniform black, by the absence of dark centres to the feathers of the throat, by the darker colouring of the abdomen, thighs, and under tail-coverts, and by its smaller measurements.

I add a revision of the key to the genus *Crateropus* as restricted by Mr. Sharpe (*Cat. B. Brit. Mus.* vii. p. 469).

*a.* Bill not yellow.

*a*<sup>1</sup>. Head not white.

*a*<sup>2</sup>. Rump not white.

*a*<sup>3</sup>. Ear-coverts neither black nor brownish black.

*a*<sup>4</sup>. Feathers of the chin and throat lanceolate, and each one tipped with white.

*a*<sup>5</sup>. Larger; wing more than 4 inches,  
4·3 to 4·5 .....

1. *jardinii*, Smith.

*b*<sup>5</sup>. Smaller; wing less than 4 inches,  
3·6 to 3·85 .....

2. *kirki*, Sharpe.

- b*<sup>4</sup>. Feathers of the chin and throat not lanceolate, and with no spots on the chin.
- b*<sup>5</sup>. With no black on the sides of the head.
- b*<sup>6</sup>. The white spots on the throat and chest rounded, and more confined to the tips of the feathers; crown paler, the dark centres to these feathers being narrower and more lanceolate; the dark centres to the feathers of the mantle very obscure; the ear-coverts and cheeks generally brown. . . . . 3. *plebeius*, Cretzschm.
- c*<sup>6</sup>. The white spots on the throat and chest not so rounded, but inclining to form white margins to the feathers; crown darker, the pale edges to these feathers being more or less absent; the dark centres to the feathers of the mantle more distinct; the ear-coverts more ashy grey . . . . . 4. *platycercus*, Swains.
- c*<sup>5</sup>. With some black on the sides of the head.
- c*<sup>6</sup>. Black on head confined to the space in front of the eyes and a narrow edging to the sides of the forehead.
- c*<sup>7</sup>. Underparts paler; with no brownish-black centres to the feathers of the throat . . . . . { 5. *melanops*, Hartl.  
6. *hypostictus*, Cab. & [Reichen.
- d*<sup>7</sup>. Underparts darker; with brownish-black centres to the feathers of the throat; chin white . . . . . 7. *tenebrosus*, Hartl.
- d*<sup>6</sup>. Ear-coverts black, and with black on the forehead.
- d*<sup>7</sup>. Forehead and crown uniform black; with black centres to most of the feathers of the throat . . . . . 8. *reinwardti*, Swains.

- e*<sup>7</sup>. Forehead black, shading into brown towards the nape, and with buff edges to the feathers of the forehead; with no black centres to the feathers of the throat, which are tipped and edged with buff ..... [Shelley.  
*9. squamulatus*,  
*b*<sup>2</sup>. Rump white ..... 10. *hartlaubi*, Bocage.  
*b*<sup>1</sup>. Head white.  
*b*<sup>2</sup>. Breast and mantle brown.  
*b*<sup>3</sup>. Rump brown, only slightly paler than the back ..... [Cretzschm.  
11. *leucocephalus*,  
*c*<sup>3</sup>. Rump white, contrasting strongly with the back ..... 12. *leucopygius*, Rüpp.  
*c*<sup>2</sup>. Head, neck, and entire body white .... 13. *bicolor*, Jard.  
*b*. Bill yellow.  
*b*<sup>2</sup>. Crown ashy grey, like the remainder of the head, throat, and crop ..... 14. *atripennis*, Hartl.  
*c*<sup>2</sup>. Crown black, contrasting with the ashy-grey forehead, sides of the head, and throat; crop maroon-brown, like the breast ..... 15. *haymesii*, Sharpe.

*C. kirki* is very closely allied to *C. jardinii*, but should, I consider, be kept specifically distinct.

*C. plebeius*, from N.E. Africa, has a very near representative in *C. platycercus* from W. Africa, where the latter is apparently represented by two races—one from the Gambia, the true *C. platycercus*, Swains., and the other from the Gold Coast, the *C. plebeius*, Hartl. (Orn. W.Afr. p. 79).

These two races only differ in the Gold-Coast specimens having the cheeks and ear-coverts more strongly washed with white, and in this respect closely agree with the figure given by Cretzschmar; the throat and breast in that figure best agree with the W.-African forms, while in the crown and mantle it most nearly represents the N.E.-African bird, for which there can be no doubt it is intended. Although these birds are closely allied, I think that the name *C. plebeius* should be kept for the N.E.-African, and *C. platycercus* for the W.-African form, and that the Gold-Coast race should not be separated from *C. platycercus*. *C. hypostictus*, Cab. &

Reichenow (J. f. O. 1877, pp. 25, 103), is only known to me by the description, and I have placed it next to *C. melanops*, on account of its having blackish-brown lores ("schwarzbraunen Zügel") and being referred to as very near *C. plebeius* (p. 25); but when I find it compared with *C. jardinii* (p. 103), I feel less certain of its true position in my key, as it may be a connecting-link between *C. kirki* and *C. melanops*. It would be a great advantage if all new species which are not accurately figured were very fully described, and a key given to show their natural position amongst their most nearly allied species.

Cretzschmar has scarcely received fair credit for his valuable '*Atlas*,' which contains original descriptions and illustrations of many specimens collected by Rüppell in N.E. Africa, previously only known by the MS. names attached to the specimens by Rüppell.

## VII.—Introduction to Gould's '*Birds of Asia*.'

By R. BOWDLER SHARPE\*.

IT having been suggested to us by Mr. Sotheran, the proprietor of the late Mr. Gould's Ornithological Works, that some few introductory remarks on the completion of the '*Birds of Asia*' (one of the works left unfinished at Mr. Gould's death) would be acceptable to the Subscribers, we have attempted to give a brief outline of the history of Asiatic ornithology during the past thirty years. It is difficult for us, whose path has been smoothed by the labours of the excellent ornithologists who have devoted themselves to the study of oriental birds, to carry our minds back to the year 1850, when Mr. Gould commenced to write the present work on the *Birds of Asia*, at a time when such names as those of Hume, Blanford, Davison, David, Przevalsky, Severtzoff, and Swinhoe were unknown to fame. In 1850 the golden age of ornithology was but commencing,

\* [Reprinted, by permission, from the concluding number of Gould's '*Birds of Asia*,' recently issued.—EDD.]